

minion, which God has an original and essential Right to exercise over all created Beings, and which he permits Men to exercise among themselves to carry on the same good Purposes, which are ultimately intended by God's own Government of the World, *all the Punishment of Evil-doers, and the Praise of them that do well.*

As therefore Submission to the higher Powers is, in general, to be ultimately resolved into a Principle of Conscience, so the particular Duty prescribed in the Text, as it is virtually included in that of Submission, is to be performed for the same Reason, *i. e. for the Lord's Sake.* And this, as it is the strongest Principle, upon which we can act, will induce us to pray for those, under whose Government we live, in as ample a Manner as they can, in Reason, desire. For the Christian Religion has not settled any particular Form of civil Government, or determined in favour of any one Form preferably to another. Nay, it does not so much as suppose the Governors, under whom Christians live, to be of the same Persuasion with them. On

1. Pet. ii. 14.

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the contrary, the Powers in being, when the Christian Religion was first published, were heathenish; and when St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* pressed upon *Christians* the Duties of Submission to, and praying for their Governors, the *Roman* Empire, under which they lived, was in the Hands of as wicked a Prince, as, perhaps, ever ruled Men, in any Part of the World. — But since God has been pleased to declare that all civil Powers, under whatever Form they appear, and by whatever Denomination they are called, are his *Ordinances*, our Submission to, and praying for them, is no longer a Matter of Choice, but of Duty. And therefore, under whatever Government Christians live, it is, and ought ever to be a sufficient Motive to them to submit to, and pray for the Welfare of that Government, that God is pleased to approve of it, in general; as his *Ordinance*. — And when, upon such a Principle as this, we submit to our lawful Governors, and pray for their Welfare, as they are the *Ministers* of God, we ultimately honour God himself. For whatever Regard is shewn to a Representative, is, and ought always to be deemed, a Regard intended to the Principal. And therefore, for the same Reason that we honour God as supreme Governor
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of the World, ought we, in Proportion, to honour and pray for Kings, and for all that are in Authority under them, because they are all Representatives of God, and exercise a Power which is derived from him.

AMONGST all these Reasons I would chuse to press the Duty of a quiet and peaceable Submission to our Governors from a Principle of Religion and Conscience; because it is a lasting Principle, which will always secure to Governors the Obedience of those Subjects, whose Obedience deserves most to be secured. — Not but that the other Reasons, which I have laid before you, carry great Weight with them; and may possibly, by operating upon different Persons in a different Manner, produce the same happy Effect: I mean a dutiful Subjection to his present *Majesty*. — To press *this*, is the principal End which I proposed to myself throughout this Discourse, and the present Solemnity particularly calls upon us to remember. — And it ought still to be farther observed, that there are many good Reasons to engage us to practise this Duty, arising from the particular Nature of our own Constitution, and from the present State of Affairs in *Europe*. — Things from abroad

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promise us no Good; but our own unhappy Divisions give us most Reason to fear. — Infidelity, we know, is not to be expected from the most upright Governors; and some National Discontents there will always be. — That Parties, which differ essentially in the Principles of Government, should differ in political Measures, is no Subject of Wonder. But that those, who agree in the main Principles, should yet differ in the Means of Government, is a Circumstance, which can never do us any good, and will always do us much harm. — Foreign Powers, which do not wish us well, behold this with Pleasure; and are very industrious in improving our Differences to their Advantage. — They know very well, that we *must* always be weakened in the same Proportion that we are divided. And *Discord* has taken such large Strides amongst us, that, if we do not soon see our own Folly, we shall save our foreign Enemies the Trouble of destroying us, and make ourselves the Scorn and Contempt of Mankind.

Great Britain has, hitherto, made a considerable Figure in the World. — It has been respected, — it has been feared. And it will still appear with the same Weight and Dignity if we act with united Hands and Hearts. —

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All the Motives which arise from Interest, Duty, and Gratitude, conspire to engage us in such an Union. — The great Blessings, which were proposed to be obtained by the *Revolution*, are now secured to us in the Establishment of a Protestant Family upon the Throne. — We have learned, by an Experience of many Years, both under the Government of His present *Majesty* and that of His Royal Father, that neither of them ever desired to do any Thing contrary to Law. — Such a Disposition in a crowned Head, as it is seldom to be found, can never be valued too much. — And this alone would conciliate to His *Majesty* the sincere Affections of all his Subjects, if we had a just Sense of the great Happiness there is, in being governed by Law, and not by the arbitrary Will of *One Man*. — But besides this, every Subject of *Great Britain* has so great a Share in making those Laws, by which they are to be governed, that we must carry a Self-condemnation along with us, if we do not pay a willing Obedience to His *Majesty*, when his Government is directed by Laws, which are, in a very proper Sense, our own Acts and Deeds.

I hope we do not meet together upon this Occasion for mere Form's Sake; but to fill

our

our Hearts with a joyful Sense of the Return of this Day: — To revolve in our Minds the many Reasons we have to think ourselves happy under our present Constitution; and to pray God, that he would grant our *most gracious Sovereign*, Health and a long Life, and direct him, and those that are in Authority under him, to such Measures, as may end in our mutual Happiness.

These are the only Ends that can be intended by the anniversary Observation of this auspicious Day. — And, if our Behaviour is agreeable to what our Intentions ought to be, we shall thereby make the Burthen of Government light and easy to His *Majesty*; bring down a Blessing upon the Endeavours of those that act under him; and enjoy, in His Reign, the great Happiness of a *quiet and peaceable Life*.



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The 5th Day of O C T O B E R, 1712.

By FRANCIS GASTRELL, D.D.

Chaplain in Ordinary to Her M A J E S T Y, and
Preacher to the Honourable Society of *Lincoln's-Inn.*

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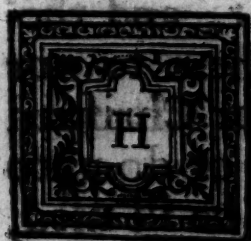
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Printed by J. L. for H. CLEMENTS, at the Half-Moon
in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1712.



R. O M. xiv. 18.

*He that in these things serveth Christ,
is acceptable to God, and approved
by Men.*



HE that serveth Christ, serveth God; and he that performeth the Will of God, will, no doubt, be acceptable to Him. These are Truths which have a necessary Dependance upon one another; and no Man, that believes the Christian Religion, can be dispos'd to call them in question. But, that the Service of Christ should gain us the Approbation of Men; that the Practice of those Duties, which he hath enjoyn'd us, should render us acceptable to the World; is what we cannot so easily conceive. We find in

10 Scripture, how, upon the first Preaching
 21 of the Gospel, the Servants and Disciples
 -11 of Christ were hated and despised by the
 30 World, how they were persecuted from
 21 Place to Place, and evil spoken of, and
 10 evil intreated wherever they came: And
 10 all that should embrace the same Faith
 20 afterwards, are bid to expect the same
 10 Usage. But, notwithstanding the Op-
 -11 position that may be sometimes made to
 -20 the Christian Faith by Unbelievers, and
 21 such as are disturbed in their contrary
 10 Perswasions and Practises by it; and tho'
 20 we are strictly obliged to adhere to our
 25 Profession, and to perform our Christian
 Duty, whatever Men shall say or do unto
 us upon this Account; yet to be ill used,
 11 and to be ill spoken of, is not the general
 20 Lot of Christians. Neither are these the
 21 necessary or natural Consequences that
 attend the Practice of those Graces and
 Vertues which are enjoyn'd us by the
 Gospel: On the contrary; Most of them
 10 are such, as, in their natural and direct
 20 Tendency, are likely to procure us the
 21 Approbation and good Will of Men. And,
 21 tho'

tho' we are not to make that the End or Motive of any Part of our Duty, yet it is for the Honour of Religion, and the Encouragement of such as are but just entering upon the Ways of Vertue and Goodness, or are not far advanc'd in them, to shew, That there's no kind of Pleasure or Advantage, which, by the natural Frame and Temper of our Minds, we are dispos'd to seek, but what may be found in Religion as well as in Vice; and more especially, that Satisfaction which results from the good Opinion and Esteem of our Brethren, which, of all other, we are the most desirous of, and which has the greatest Influence upon our Actions.

Of what Importance then to Religion, the Assurance given us in the Text will be, That those who *serve God* shall be *approved by Men*; will appear from these Two Heads.

I. By considering how great a desire Men have to approve themselves to one another; and what a mighty Influence this has upon Human Conduct.

II. By

II. By shewing, That Religion is more likely to gain us the Esteem of Men than Vice; and, that such as are approved by Men upon a Religious Account, have more reason to be pleas'd with the Opinion of others, than those who are commended or valued for any thing that is Vicious or Sinful.

I. In the First Place then, I shall consider, How great a desire Men have to approve themselves to one another; and what a mighty Influence this has upon Human Conduct.

'Tis very strange to observe, that, notwithstanding the good Opinion which every Man hath of himself, his own Reason and Judgment, and his Capacity to direct his own Affairs, and to provide for his own Happiness, there's hardly any Man but what submits to the Opinion and Judgment of others; and in most of his Actions, suffers himself to be governed and directed by his Brethren.

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In Matters of Truth and Falshood, Good and Evil, Wisdom and Folly, How few are there who consult their own Reason about them, and judge for themselves according to the Evidence or Probability of Things? The common Way is to judge as the World does, and to take our Opinions from one another upon trust, without Examination. Our Understandings are very pliable and submissive, and receive the Characters and Impressions that are made upon them without distinguishing, or disputing.

And, in the same Way, is all our Conduct ordered and disposed for us. None of our Ways and Methods of Living are of our own choosing; but are such as the prevailing Humour of the World is pleas'd to prescribe to us. We must do as the rest of our Rank and Condition do, whatever Desires or Opportunities we may have of doing otherwise: Whatever the World puts a Value and Esteem upon, must be proportionably the Object of every Man's Admiration and Pursuit; And 'tis in vain to pretend to any solid and substantial Ad-

Advantages, without furnishing ourselves also with a due Share of those Ornaments and Appendages of Life which happen to be in request among us. And, let the publick Opinion or Value of Things change as often as it will, we must as often fall in with it, without ever condemning ourselves for Inconstancy.

All our Entertainments and Diversions, and most of our Pleasures of every sort and kind, are such as Custom hath recommended to us; and are not immediately owing to any natural Inclination we have toward them. 'Tis true indeed, the Foundation of all our Pleasure is laid in Nature; but the Objects of it, the particular Things we take delight in, are, for the most part, such as the Opinion and Practice of others, and not our own Inclinations, have directed us to. And where we have followed Nature in the Choice of the Objects, the Degrees of our Satisfaction have been increas'd by an arbitrary Value and Price set upon it by publick Opinion.

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As for Instance; Knowledge is of it self agreeable to the Soul; and Sagacity and Wit are such Talents as Men are naturally disposed to be pleased with: And yet we see it has sometimes happened, that such Kinds of Knowledge and Wit have been in Fashion, and Men have laid out themselves in Searches and Inquiries of that Nature as we cannot now persuade our selves to like; but we are apt to look upon all their labour and skill either with pity or contempt: But no doubt they found Pleasure in those things which we now despise; and it was wholly owing to the Reputation they then had that they did so.

But, what will appear still more strange to us, even the Pleasures of Sense are many of them intirely owing to Opinion; and those that are not so are heightened and increased by it. There are many Things which are not in themselves grateful and agreeable, and yet, upon a publick Promise of the World that we shall find them so, we take pains with our selves to reconcile them to our Senses; and

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where

where the Things are naturally Grateful, the Pleasure is extended by our Imaginations; and our Imaginations are raised by the great Character and Recommendation which others have given us of that particular Satisfaction we are in pursuit of.

And such is the Power and Influence which the Opinion of Men hath over us, that we hardly do any Thing without some regard to it. Either the desire of Pleasing, or the fear of Offending has some share in the Moving and Determining us in almost every Action of Life: So that even in our privacy and retirement, we like the same Things, and act in the same Manner, as if the World were to see what we did; because the Impressions and Habits both of Judging and Acting, which we received from publick Opinion and Custom, are so strong, and have so early and insensibly insinuated themselves into our Souls, that they remain and are in force, when the first Causes and Occasions of them are absent; and Govern and Direct us, when we think we are following our own Reason only.

Nay,

Nay, tho' the World has been so Just to us as to recommend those Things to our Choice which are worthy of our Care and Pursuit; and tho', together with their Esteem, they have at the same time conveyed to us the true Grounds and Reasons of it, yet we often take up with their Opinion only; and, in order to obtain it, we are content with the Shew and Appearance of what they recommend, without having the Thing it self; or else we labour for the Thing, without making that Use of it which was the Ground of their Value and Esteem.

Thus, for Example, do Men court the Appearances of such Knowledge as gives them a Reputation, without being at the pains of instructing themselves in what they would seem to Know: And many that understand in reality whatever they pretend to, aim at nothing farther then to be admired for it. And so it is in most other Instances: Many that are not Rich would appear to be so; and of those that are, there are very few that imploy their Wealth to those Ends for which

they were directed to get it, and upon which the Respect and Esteem of the World is founded.

Should we further consider how often we cross all the other Inclinations and Desires of our Nature, in order to gain or preserve the Esteem of Men, and what violence we do to our selves that we may avoid offending them; we should be still more and more convinced, what powerful Principles of Action, Reputation and Disgrace are, and how large a share they have in the Conduct of Human Affairs. But every Man has abundance of Instances and Observations of this Nature within his view; so that there's no occasion to be particular upon this Head, were it not, as it truly is, an endless, as well as a common Subject.

H. I proceed therefore to the Second Thing propos'd; which was to shew, That Religion is more likely to gain us the Approbation and Esteem of Men than Vice; and, that such as are approved by Men upon a Religious Account, have more reason
to

to be pleased with the Good Opinion of others than those who are commended and valued for any Thing that is Vicious or Sinful.

And if we run over the several Objects of Men's Esteem, this will plainly appear to be true upon every Head. Now whatever is respected and valued in the World may be reduced to these Two Heads; viz. *The Perfections of the Mind*, and *External Advantages*.

As to all the External Advantages we are capable of, such as come under the Title of *Person, Descent, Fortune, Condition, Circumstances* or *Possessions*, and whatever the Soul of Man is pleased with out of it self; these the Righteous and the Ungodly have in common; and there is the same Value put upon them whatever Hands they are found in. Now Religion is so far from lessening their Price, that it very often raises it. For if the Vertue of the Son comes up to the Merit and Fame of his Ancestor, he will be the more respected for his Birth; and if a Man shall be esteemed by the World,
for